

NEW JERSEY
BEST PRACTICES
2002-2003 APPLICATION

Failure to comply with the procedures for submission of the application will result in the elimination of the application.

Application Requirements:

- RESPONSES to the information and the statements below must be ANONYMOUS and ACCURATE.** No reference should be made to the names of the district, the school(s) or community. Use the words "the school" or "the schools" in responding to the statements
- USE ONLY THE SPACE PROVIDED ON THE APPLICATION FORM on pages 1, 2 (if applicable), and 4. Do not** include any additional materials, as they will not be reviewed in the selection process.
- Applications must be typed on 8 1/2" x 11" white paper, portrait format. Twelve-point or larger computer font or fourteen-pitch or larger typewritten font must be used. This sentence is in twelve-point Times New Roman.
- Keyboarded responses to all the statements below must be no more than a total of four pages. Keyboard and number the statement followed by the response. Format your response for clarity.
- The information on page 4 and the responses to statements must be copied on one side of the page.** The information on pages 1 and 2 (if applicable) must be copied on one side of the page. Staple pages 1, 2 (if applicable), 4, and the keyboarded responses together, in that same order.
- The original application must be signed by the district chief school administrator or charter school lead person, indicating his/her approval.
- The original and seven copies of the application must be submitted to the county superintendent of schools by December 15, 2002, with the Itemized List of District Applications form.** Keep the seven copies of each application together with the original containing the signature of the district chief school administrator or charter school lead person on the top of each set.

The following data is required to assist the panelists in the evaluation of the application:		
Type of School <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elementary School <input type="checkbox"/> Middle School <input type="checkbox"/> Junior High School <input type="checkbox"/> High School <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	Grade Levels First _____ _____ _____ _____	Practice Name <u>Get It While Its Hot</u> <hr/> Number of Schools with Practice <u>one</u> Number of Districts with Practice <u>one</u> Location <input type="checkbox"/> Urban/City <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban With Urban Characteristics <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Small City/Town <input type="checkbox"/> Rural

Check the ONE CATEGORY into which the practice best fits.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Arts (Visual and Performing Arts) <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment/Evaluation <input type="checkbox"/> Citizenship/Character Education <input type="checkbox"/> Diversity and Equity Programs <input type="checkbox"/> Early Childhood Education Programs <input type="checkbox"/> Educational Support Programs <input type="checkbox"/> Educational Technology	<input type="checkbox"/> Gifted and Talented Programs <input type="checkbox"/> Guidance and Counseling Programs <input type="checkbox"/> Health and Physical Education <input type="checkbox"/> Language Arts Literacy <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Development <input type="checkbox"/> Public Engagement (family involvement and partnerships with business, community, school districts, and/or higher education)	<input type="checkbox"/> Safe Learning Environment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School-to-Careers/Workplace Readiness <input type="checkbox"/> Science <input type="checkbox"/> Social Studies <input type="checkbox"/> Special Education <input type="checkbox"/> World Languages/Bilingual Education

- Describe the practice proposed for recognition, and list its objectives. Detail how the practice is innovative and how it promotes high student achievement.
- List the specific *Core Curriculum Content Standards*, including the *Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards*,* addressed by the practice and describe how the practice addresses those standard(s). Provide an example to substantiate your response.
- Describe the educational needs of students that the practice addresses. Document the assessment measures used to determine the extent to which the objectives of the practice have been met. Provide assessments and data to show how the practice met these needs.
- Describe how you would replicate the practice in another school and/or district.

*The 2002 edition of the *Core Curriculum Content Standards* published by the New Jersey State Department of Education was disseminated to all districts and charter schools and is available on line through the department's web site at <http://www.state.nj.us/education>

1. Describe the practice proposed for recognition, and list its objectives. Detail how the practice is innovative and how it promotes high student achievement.

“So, what did you do at school today?” All parents know the typical response to this daily question: “Nothing.” Teachers and parents are fairly certain that learning does take place and that interesting things do happen each day behind those classroom doors. Teachers have created monthly newsletters in order to bridge that gap of information from classroom to home, but this did not seem to be enough. Our First Graders still could not adequately recall classroom events and did not show a personal interest in a class newsletter. Our classroom newsletter needed to be more than just informational: it needed to become part of the learning experience. The children would become accountable for the accumulation of information and the publication of the newsletter. Since these students are First Graders this would also be an innovative way to improve early reading and writing skills, communication skills and use technology on a day to day basis.

With children as the catalyst “Get It While It’s Hot!” meets the following objectives:

- ✓ Better recall of classroom happenings.
- ✓ Improve language skills as students summarize and report weekly information.
- ✓ Improve sentence structure as students write for authentic purposes.
- ✓ Improve sight word vocabulary.
- ✓ Improve oral reading as students orally record certain articles in the newsletter.
- ✓ Improve behavior and self discipline as students work cooperatively.
- ✓ Gain a deeper knowledge of careers as students work to create a publication.
- ✓ Improve skills in the use of technology, PowerPoint and a digital camera.
- ✓ Increase self motivation as students see a project through to the end and take pride in their accomplishment.
- ✓ Improve parental interest as parents are provided a timely report of classroom activities.

In late August the teacher uses PowerPoint to create a newsletter, mailing copies home to each child entering her First Grade class. This creates excitement about beginning First Grade.

During the month of September the teacher prepares a weekly newsletter for parents, including all the small details that might be forgotten by the students: poems and stories, songs, assemblies, weekly specials, birthdays and celebrations, classroom visitors, teeth lost, and any long-range assignments. A digital camera is used to assure up to date documentation of school events. A “template” begins to take shape to ease the eventual transition from teacher to student-created publication.

In October the teacher chooses a small group of First Graders to act as reporters. These groups change weekly, thereby ensuring widespread and continual participation. Reporters are responsible for writing some of the simple “news” items on lined paper: who lost teeth this week, who had a birthday, titles of books read aloud. These news items are tacked onto a highly visible bulletin board whose “template” replicates that of the newsletter. The teacher types this information (as well as more involved news stories) onto the newsletter for weekly publication.

In November First Graders begin taking responsibility for using the digital camera to record classroom activities. Also in November students begin to record some of the news stories onto the weekly PowerPoint slide so that struggling readers can view the newsletter on the computer and click on the icon to hear the news.

By December First Graders take on more responsibility for keyboarding some of the news onto the PowerPoint program. The anticipation is evident as students, by now, are volunteering for positions of reporter, photographer, typist and reader.

By the end of First Grade students have a slide show of classroom events which is viewed at an end of the year celebration and can be copied onto CDs for individual mementos.

2. List the specific Core Curriculum Content Standards, including the Cross Content Workplace Readiness Standards addressed by the practice and describe how the practice addresses those standards. Provide an example to substantiate your response.

“Get It While It’s Hot!” addresses the following Core Curriculum Content Standards and Workplace Readiness Skills through the following activities:

- ✓ Workplace Standard 1.1: Students will demonstrate employability skills and work habits, such as work ethic, dependability, promptness, and getting along with others. Reporting in small groups allows students to work cooperatively to gather, review and update the news and to complete a task within a given timeframe.
- ✓ Workplace Standard 2.8: Students will use technology and other tools, including word-processing, spreadsheet and presentation programs, and print or graphic utilities, to produce products. Using a digital camera and the PowerPoint program allows students to access technology to produce a work product. They experience firsthand how to create a slide show and input data.
- ✓ Workplace Standard 3.8: Students will organize, synthesize, and evaluate information for appropriateness and completeness. Students are responsible for including the day to day news items, including photographs, on the bulletin board display. Later, as students take over responsibility for keyboarding and recording some of the news, evaluating for completeness is even more important.
- ✓ Workplace Standard 4.2: Students will work cooperatively with others to accomplish a task. Compiling the weekly information (writing, typing, recording and photographing the news) allows students to work cooperatively to complete the newsletter in a timely manner. Seeing the finished product each Friday creates a great feeling of accomplishment and pride in their group effort.
- ✓ Literacy Standard 3.1: Students will speak for a variety of real purposes and audiences: The audio portion of the newsletter is centered on students speaking in conjunction with the slide.
- ✓ Literacy Standard 3.2: Students will listen actively in a variety of situations to information from a variety of sources. As student reporters hear news-worthy events they must summarize and post the item on the bulletin board.

- ✓ Literacy Standard 3.3: Students will write in clear, concise, organized language that varies in content and form for different audiences and purposes: The steps leading up to the weekly PowerPoint newsletter include students listing or summarizing news on a bulletin board, then composing sentences based upon the news.
- ✓ Literacy Standard 3.4: Students will read a variety of materials and texts with comprehension and critical analysis. Reading the sentences aloud while recording onto PowerPoint provides clarity and understanding.

3. Describe the educational needs of students that the practice addresses. Document the assessment measures used to determine the extent to which the objectives of the practice have been met. Provide assessments and data to show how the practice met these needs.

As previously mentioned, parents seem uniformed and students seem disinterested when it comes to recalling classroom events. “Get It While It’s Hot!” provides a venue for students to be involved in the collection and publication of current events on a weekly basis. Imagine the heightened sense of pride as students bring their newsletter home, announcing “I was the reporter this week!”

Assessment measures include the following:

- ✓ Successful completion of each issue of “First Grade Weekly News”, and the end-of-the-year slide show presentation.
- ✓ Post testing at the end of the year shows improved language arts skills.
- ✓ The teacher observes improved organizational skills.
- ✓ Student cooperation, excitement and love of learning are enhanced as reported by teachers and parents.
- ✓ Skills in the use of computers, digital cameras, and presentation programs are developed to a finer degree than previously experienced in the primary grades.

4. Describe how you would replicate the practice in another school and/or district.

“Get It While It’s Hot!” is a relatively easy project to replicate on any grade level. In older grade levels students would be able to take over responsibility at a much faster pace. Depending upon the skill level of each teacher it might be useful to engage the help of a technology support person in your building to provide assistance with the digital camera, downloading the digital photographs, and recording the voices onto the slide.

It is also important to note that while individual students are keyboarding or recording onto the PowerPoint slide, the remainder of the class is working independently or in small groups on various literacy projects.